

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

16. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 15, comprising a third hotmelt adhesive applicator instead of the second hotmelt adhesive applicator for continuously applying a ~~fourth~~ third hotmelt adhesive to the upper surface of the running second nonwoven fabric except absorbent polymer powder absent areas at opposite widthwise end portions and an absorbent polymer powder absent area located at least at one location between the opposite widthwise end portions while defining clearances.